Reducing import duty on steel

*166. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to cut down the import duty on steel;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it would not adversely affect the interests of indigenous steel producers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Any step to change the existing rates would be taken at an appropriate time keeping in view the interests of both the steel manufacturers and the steel consumers.

Recommendations on wildlife

*167. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) at what stage is the implementation of the recommendations on wildlife consequent to the construction of the Rengali Irrigation Project in Orissa pending;

(b) the details of the recommendations; and

(c) how much money has remained unutilised on this head and the interest that has accrued on the principal by non-action on the wildlife points?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The environmental and forestry clearances for the Rengali Irrigation Project in Orissa were accorded by the Government on 4.12.1996 and 14.5.2003 respectively. The recommendations relevant to wildlife are as under:-

(i) Crossing points for wild elephants will be provided in consultation with the State Forest Department at the project cost.

(ii) The user agency shall ensure that there should be no damage to the available wildlife.

(iii) For protection of wildlife and its habitat in the project impact area, the detailed Action Plan as indicated in the"Conservation and Management of Wildlife Report" should be strictly followed.

(iv) Kapilash along with adjoining forest blocks should be declared as a Wildlife Sanctuary immediately by the State Government Funds required for this purpose will be made available by the Project Authority. The Forest Department should provide protection to vegetation at Anantapur Reserved Forests which is in a degraded state so that the vegetation cover is allowed to regenerate. An amount of Rs. 150 lakh will be made available for development of Satkosia and Hadgarh wildlife sanctuaries. The money should be used for development of the two sanctuaries keeping in view that animals do not migrate and intrude on farm land which they do at present.

(v) For monitoring of the conservation and wildlife Action Plan, a representative of the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun and a representative of Government may be included in the Monitoring Committee. The expenditure on wildlife management may be reviewed by these members to ensure the best possible use of funds for protection of the environment/wildlife.

The following recommendations have been implemented:-

(i) Plans and design for construction of elephant-bridges have been approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden and provided to the project authorities for implementation.

(ii) The user agency has been asked to ensure that there should be no damage to the available wildlife.

(iii) The project authorities have deposited an amount of Rs. 4.31 crores with the Chief Wildlife Warden for implementation of "Conservation and Management of Wildlife Report".

(c) The amount of Rs. 4.31 crores deposited by the project authorities remains unutilized. No interest has accrued on this amount as it has been deposited under the head "forest deposit".